



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 106th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 145

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, APRIL 19, 1999

No. 53

Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, this is a day for rejoicing over the manifold good things You have given us. Help us to take nothing and no one for granted. As we move through this day, help us to savor the sheer wonder of being alive. Thank You for giving us the ability to think, understand, and receive Your guidance. We praise You for the people You have placed in our lives. Help us to appreciate the never-to-be-repeated miracle of each personality.

We are grateful for the challenges we have before us which compel us to depend on You more. Thank You, too, for opportunities that are beyond our ability to fulfill so that we may be forced to trust You for wisdom and strength. We rejoice over Your daily interventions to help us; we even rejoice in our problems, for they allow You to show us Your power to provide solutions. Free us to rejoice in the privilege of new discoveries.

In all things, great and small, we rejoice in You, gracious Lord of all! Through the indwelling presence and inspiring power of our Savior and Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, for the leader, I would like to give this information. It is for all Senators. The Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m. Following morning business, the Senate may begin

consideration of S. 531, a bill to authorize a congressional gold medal for Rosa Parks. If this legislation is cleared for action, a vote will occur at 5:30 p.m. We will notify all Senators of an exact voting schedule when that information becomes available.

Also, Senators may expect to consider any legislative or executive items cleared for action.

The majority leader would like to, again, remind all Senators that there will be no session of the Senate Friday, April 23. He thanks all of our colleagues for their attention.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AL-LARD). Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 2 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

INHALANTS AND GHB

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I speak often about the threat that illegal drugs pose to our young people. Today, I want to address a serious problem from substances common in virtually every home in the country. There are several trends in substance abuse among young people that are happening literally under our noses. I want to address two substances that receive little attention but cause much pain and suffering. Most people are not familiar with the harms of either of these substances. However, our familiarity with and attention to these lethal substances is well overdue. The subject is: inhalants and GHB.

Inhalants are among the scariest substance being abused by teenagers

today. Why? Because, kids have to go no further than their own kitchen cabinets to find them. Inhalants are everyday household products such as hair spray, cleaning fluids, air-fresheners, and whipped cream. More than 1,000 common household products have the potential to be abused. Kids are sniffing these easily obtainable household products to get a cheap high. In many cases, inhalants are used as an alternative to alcohol, clearly because young people don't have to break any laws to get them. Some see abuse of inhalants as a childish phase or youthful experimenting, but let me assure you "inhalant abuse" is deadly serious.

Inhalants kill hundreds of children each year. Since July of 1996, over 250 children have died from intentionally ingesting toxic fumes. Inhalants rank fourth among the substances abused by teens ages twelve to seventeen. Only alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana rank higher. In fact, inhalant abuse has gotten so bad that it is now considered a gateway drug. Like other gateway drugs, about one in five teens will try "sniffing" before they graduate. What is even more astounding is that inhalant abuse is a problem with children as young as eight; those in second grade.

Unfortunately, many do not acknowledge the severity of inhalant abuse until it is too late. A recent tragedy in a Philadelphia suburb demonstrated the lethal effects of inhalants when five sixteen-year-old girls were killed in a car accident. The coroner found that four of the five, including the driver, had ingested significant amounts of computer keyboard cleaner. Sadly, the girls were out shopping for dresses for a prom they will never attend.

The problem is that too many of us are unaware of the dangers of inhalants. According to a 1997 National Household Survey on Drugs, nine out of ten parents don't believe their children have ever abused inhalants. But surveys indicate that almost a half-a-million teens abuse inhalants every

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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month. In fact, of those parents who do talk to their kids about drugs, less than half address inhalant abuse. Why aren't we talking about a substance that starves the brain of oxygen to the point of suffocation? Why aren't we warning our kids that these household products can cause damage to the brain and nervous system? We can't expect a teenager to know the severity of sniffing unless we tell them.

We need to alert parents and kids to the dangers of inhalants. This is the reason Congress named the week of March 21 through March 27 as "National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week". It is evident to me that this kind of recognition is imperative to reducing inhalant abuse. We cannot lock up our kids. We cannot keep many items with the potential for abuse out of the world our young people inhabit. What we can and must do is to exercise more responsibility and pay closer attention.

Another substance that is consuming our youth is GHB. If you aren't familiar with this drug, it may be because there is little information available on its fatal effects. In fact, GHB was sold over the counter as a dietary supplement in health food stores until 1990. Today, advocates of GHB believe the drug is harmless and should continue to be sold over the counter. Unfortunately, a person doing research on the drug will find more information supporting the use of GHB rather than reporting the realistic effects of the drug. For this reason, GHB continues to be sold as a recreational drug and perceived as harmless. These perceptions have proved deadly for many.

GHB has become popular at parties known as "Raves". These all-night parties glamorize the use of drugs and alcohol. "Ravers" are taking GHB to feel relaxed, to loose their inhibitions, and to increase their sexual libidos. However, the truth is that too much GHB or GHB mixed with other drugs can cause seizures, comas, severe vomiting, and respiratory arrests. In addition, GHB causes amnesia. For this reason, it has been frequently used as a date rape drug. Unknowing victims are slipped GHB and can't remember their attacker the next day.

Since GHB is a newly abused drug, there have been few studies done to illustrate its effects. However, the Drug Abuse Warning Network reports an increase in GHB-related emergency department episodes from 20 in 1992 to 629 in 1996. Among these episodes, 91 percent reported that their reason for using GHB was for recreational purposes. Of that 91 percent, 33 percent claimed they had no idea what GHB would do to them.

Based on what we know, there are no safe levels of use. There are no known ways to predict side effects. And there are no ways to anticipate how GHB will react with other substances. Yet, young people are being told this drug is okay. Well, it isn't. And I don't believe parents want their children self-pres-

cribing any drugs, much less one so dangerous. We have to let kids know that GHB is a serious drug with serious consequences. If we know so little about GHB, we can assume kids know even less. It is imperative that we warn kids of the dangers involved in these substances.

Mr. President, how much time do I have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Less than a minute.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask permission to have 5 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BRAZILIAN SOY MEAL PURCHASE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to address a family farm issue and I want to take this opportunity to send a clear message to other portions of agriculture that I sense are not supporting the family farmers of America the way they should be, when in reality, the organizations I'm finding fault with are in the very same boat as any family farmer in America. What's even more disturbing to me, some of these really big megapork producers in America refer to themselves as family farms. It's in the title of their organization.

The fact is, Mr. President, family farmers are facing the lowest soybean prices in 23 years. Farmers are currently storing more soybeans on the farm than at any other point in the 1990's. In addition, the American Soybean Association forecasts this year the United States will have a larger number of carry-out stocks than at any other point this decade. Due to the excessive available supply, family farmers marketing soybeans are in a very difficult situation.

Soybean prices will not improve until U.S. reserves are diminished. But, believe it or not, the cooperative that I've referred to, composed of some of the largest livestock integrators in the Nation, are planning to import soybean meal from Brazil. And, of course, this is going to have a very significant negative impact on American soybean producers. But, more important, it is demoralizing to the family farmers of America who are producing soybeans to read reports about other so-called family farmers importing soybean meal from another country.

The cooperative located in the Southeast United States will bring in three foreign shipments totaling 75,000 metric tons of soybean meal. And, by the way, for those of you who don't know agriculture, soybean meal is used as a protein supplement in feed, which when combined with corn and other feed grains helps to prepare the hogs for slaughter and domestic consumption.

I reported to you that they will be bringing in 75,000 metric tons of soybean meal on three different foreign shipments. It takes approximately 52 bushels of soybeans to produce one

metric ton of soybean meal. This means that U.S. soybean producers are losing an opportunity to market nearly 4 million bushels of soybeans to these six producers of hogs who are part of this cooperative.

With the current crisis in the agriculture community, it's an understatement to say that this purchase has not been well-received by soybean producers. It has already been my impression that when times are tough on the farm, the agriculture community, both farm and non-farm, pitches in to help each other. From individual barn raisings to emergency hay lifts, family farmers stick together to help each other. Now, with soybeans under \$5 a bushel, and that's a 23-year low, I would hope that this was one of those times when the ag community would come together in the face of adversity.

Maybe I'm wrong, or maybe the livestock integrators which make up the cooperative in question don't understand the impact of their actions. One of the entities involved in the cooperative holds itself out to be a family farm organization. Well, if it's really a family farm, this is the perfect time to show its true colors and support American family farmers.

Mr. President, if the entities within this cooperative buying group want to be considered as family farmers, they should support the family farmers, and I'm speaking specifically about Murphys' Family Farms, Carroll Foods, Prestage, Smithfield Foods, Goldsboro Farms, and NashJohnson and Sons Farms. These are the members of this cooperative that are buying soybean meal from Brazil when we have this oversupply in our own country.

Now, as I indicated to you, family farmers generally help family farmers. And I have never once complained in America as a matter of public policy about something being too big. These are obviously very big producers of pork in the United States. I have no resentment that they are successful. But some of these operations feed some of their livestock in my State of Iowa. We are the number-one soybean-producing State. It seems to me that whether the feed in question that's coming from Brazil is used in North Carolina or used in Iowa, it still is wrong to do this to the people that you consider your neighbors in each of these States. I would like to have all these farmers get their heart into American family farm agriculture or get their rear-end out.

I urge this cooperative to reassess its position and consider the plight of the family farmer. Place American farmers' long-term interests above what may only be a short-term gain and obviously a very bad public relations stunt for each of you. I yield the floor.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.